

Identities in transition: a longitudinal study of immigrant children

Final Report to ESRC

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1. Background

Currently in Europe, there is heightened concern about immigration (e.g., Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC), 2007; MORI, 2003). In this project, we have focussed on a little studied issue: the relationship between young children with immigration backgrounds and their peers from the majority in the host society. In particular, we were concerned with identity and acculturation processes and the implications of these for the children's psychological well-being and social acceptance. Our primary focus has been on minority group children since it is this group that faces the most serious potential problems of social exclusion. However, we studied majority group children for comparison purposes.

In its recent report, the CIC (2007) defined a cohesive community as, "where strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, *in schools* and within neighbourhoods" (p. 40, our emphasis), and identified educational settings as one of four spheres for priority action to reduce social exclusion. This provides a timely reminder of the issues with which we have been concerned: How do children from different backgrounds view each other? How do processes of acculturation impact on feelings of well-being and social acceptance in young children? And, are there developmental changes in these processes?

A prominent approach in considering the socio-psychological dynamics of host-immigrant relationships is Berry's acculturation framework (e.g., Berry, 2001). This identifies four acculturation strategies, formed from the combination of two orientations: a desire to maintain (or relinquish) ethnic identity, and a desire to interact with other groups (or not). People can be classified as 'high' or 'low' on each orientation, resulting in the strategies of 'integration' (high on both), 'assimilation' (low, high), 'separation' (high, low) and 'marginalization' (low, low). The first is usually associated with more favourable outcomes both for minority group members and host society-immigrant relations (Berry, 2001; Zagefka & Brown, 2002). However, little is yet known about acculturation processes and their consequences in children.

A central issue in acculturation research is 'identity', especially the maintenance of ethnic identity. Yet identity has been little studied in that literature. In contrast, Social Identity Theory has provided an account of various identity maintenance strategies likely to be adopted by members of 'devalued' groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999). However, this account is silent on how identity processes operate in children, and on how children deal with identity conflicts between their heritage culture and those categories that may be imposed by the host society (e.g., 'immigrant', 'nationality') (though see Nesdale, 2004).

Developmental research offers some useful pointers. First, social categories (e.g., ethnicity) are meaningful for young children from 5 years and are implicated in their intergroup attitudes (e.g. Aboud, 1988; Rutland et al., 2007). Second, from middle childhood children begin to incorporate category memberships into their social identities (Ruble, Alvarez, Bachman, & Cameron, 2004). What is still lacking is an

account of how a sense of belonging to social groups develops in early childhood and influences socio-psychological outcomes (Bennett & Sani, 2004).

There is some consensus that an important period for social identity development is between 5 and 11 years (Nesdale, 2004; Ruble et al., 2004). During this time, children's understanding of social categories becomes more sophisticated and ceases to rely solely on physical cues (e.g., skin colour) but becomes more social psychological, invoking 'internal' attributes and social/cultural norms (e.g., Ruble et al., 2004). This coincides with the onset of ethnic constancy in which children understand that ethnic group membership is typically stable and does not depend on superficial transformations in clothing or context (Rutland et al., 2005). However, it is unclear the degree to which age-related progressions in children's ethnic identification are equally applicable to immigrant and non-immigrant children. Several studies have reported differences in ethnic awareness and constancy between immigrant and host society children (Ruble et al., 2004).

The project examined the development of children's identities and acculturation orientations between 5-11 years and linked these to various outcomes: *self-esteem*; *well being*; and *social acceptance*. Twenge & Crocker's (2002) meta-analysis found no consistent pattern in minority-majority group differences in self-esteem (but cf., Brand et al., 1974), though few young samples were included in the review. Berry (1997) concluded that more favourable mental health outcomes were associated with an 'integrationist' orientation although this has been rarely investigated in children and never longitudinally. Finally, Kiesner et al. (2003) showed that classroom-based social acceptance is linked to prejudice towards ethnic minority groups. However, little is known about the social acceptance of immigrant children.

2. Objectives

- To investigate how the social identities of young immigrant (and host society) children change between 5 and 11 years
- To determine the prevalent acculturation orientations amongst immigrant children and how these change over time
- To identify the consequences of immigrant children's identities and acculturation orientations for their well-being and social acceptance
- To contribute to school integration policy

As will be seen below, we have achieved each of these objectives.

The objectives differ slightly from those set out in the original proposal. We had not originally anticipated collecting data from so many host society children. In the event, however, almost half the sample came from this population and so it made sense to include them more systematically in many of our analyses. Another sampling issue concerned the relatively small number of 1st generation immigrant children in the sample. Despite what we had been led to believe by LEAs, the ethnic minority communities in our target areas were mainly well settled, so that most of our minority sample were 2nd or later generation. Still, we were able to find enough 1st generation children to permit some statistical comparisons. Another change concerns a shift from examining 'mental health' outcomes to the more generic outcome of 'well-being'. This became necessary when, during pilot work, it became apparent that to collect

data on mental health (in a clinical sense) was simply not feasible for practical and ethical reasons.

3. Methods

3.1 Design

We used a longitudinal design. Longitudinal research is important both because it allows one to track temporal changes developmentally and also because it permits greater causal interpretability by using the logic of the cross-panel design. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The former permitted statistical analysis of potential developmental and causal effects; the latter gave insight into the children's understanding of certain emerging phenomena as well as identifying new issues for study.

The centrepiece of the project was a 12-month longitudinal study, with three testing points approximately six months apart. Data was collected via individual interviews with children. The interview data was supplemented by some 'quasi-objective' ratings from teachers on the children's behaviour.

3.2 Participants

For the main study, there were 398 participants ($F = 195$, $M = 203$). Of these, there were complete data from 337 children (i.e., only 15% attrition). The children ranged from 5 to 11 years ($M_{\text{age}} = 96$ months); in some analyses we divided this sample into Younger (5-7 years) and Older groups (8-11 years). Their ethnic backgrounds were: 180 white British; 218 ethnic minority, of whom the majority were of Indian origin (41% of overall sample); other cultural groups were, Pakistani (4%), Bangladeshi (6%), Sri Lankan (2%), Nepali (1%) and mixed ethnicity (2%). The majority of the ethnic minority children were 2nd generation, with a small number of 1st generation ($N=40$). One final variable of interest is the ethnic minority composition of schools. This varied from a high of 63% to a low of 2%, with a median of 20%.

For the first qualitative study we conducted follow-up interviews with 32 children of Punjabi-Indian background from the main study. The second qualitative study comprised 8 refugee children from Manchester (there were too few refugee children locally owing to policies of rapid dispersal from the South East).

3.3 Measures

There were few established instruments available to measure our primary constructs. Therefore, the first 5 months of the project were devoted to developing new measures. Many of these used visual representations to assist the children in their understanding of the questions (see Annex 2).

3.3.1 Outcome variables

Self-esteem: This 12 item measure was adapted from the global and social sub-scales of Harter's (1982) Perceived Competence Scale for Children. It included such items as, 'feeling pretty pleased with themselves', 'usually happy with themselves as a person', etc.

Peer acceptance: This 10 item measure was based on Cassidy & Asher's (1992) Loneliness and School Dissatisfaction Questionnaire. It included such questions as 'having other kids to talk to at school', 'feeling left out', etc.

Perceived racial discrimination: This was a 2 item measure of the frequency with which children have experienced name-calling and exclusion because of their ethnicity.

Ethnic ingroup bias: Children were asked to rate their affect towards their ethnic ingroup and the outgroup. Ingroup bias was the difference between these two scores.

Teacher ratings of children's socio-emotional behaviour: A version of Goodman's (1999) Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire was completed by teachers to obtain some quasi-objective indicators of children's socio-emotional behaviour. Two of the subscales, 'emotional symptoms' (e.g., headaches, tearful) and 'peer problems' (e.g., Rather solitary, bullied by other children) proved particularly useful.

3.3.2 Predictor variables

Acculturation orientations: These were measured with 8 items that tapped attitudes towards contact with people from another ethnic group and maintaining own culture (Berry, 1997). To assess *perceived* outgroup orientations, children were also asked how they believe people from the other group would respond to these items.

Ethnic and English identification: These measures were adapted from Barrett's (2007) Strength of Identification Scale. First, we established which ethnic groups children identified with by asking them to select from a list of categories. Children then ranked their selected categories in importance. Throughout the interview, children's highest ranking ethnic/religious identity was considered the child's ethnic ingroup. Then followed 4 questions concerning the strength of identification with that group, and also with 'English'.

3.3.3 Qualitative interviews

Two types of interview were undertaken, on acculturation and on aspects of social capital. The examination of acculturation flowed from the research objectives while the exploration of social capital developed as a consequence of observing the interrelatedness between salient issues emerging from the research and the literature on social capital, ethnicity and education (Halpern, 2005; Watters, 2007). In particular, the distinction between 'bonding' and 'bridging' capital offers a fruitful framework for investigating children's responses to diversity.

The acculturation interviews included vignettes and visual material to explore the children's views regarding the maintenance of cultural traditions - for example, going to the Gudwara. The social capital interviews focussed on trustful relationships and expectations of reciprocity drawing on common scenarios such as whom they would go to for help with homework, and who they would turn to if they experienced bullying. The interviews also explored the children's membership of clubs and hobbies and their future aspirations.

4. Results

We present our findings under three headings. Where differences or relationships between variables or groups are mentioned, it can be assumed that these were statistically significant ($p < .05$ or less).

4.1 Developmental effects, Minority-Majority comparisons and effects of school diversity

Here we make comparisons between Age groups (8-11 years vs. 5-7 years), Majority-Minority status (including, 1st vs. later immigrant generation), and low ($< 20\%$) vs. high ($\geq 20\%$) Diversity schools over three Time points. The principal analytic method was a mixed model ANOVA.

4.1.1 Peer acceptance

Overall, peer acceptance was high (mean (M) ≈ 3.4 on a 4 point scale). It was higher for majority than for minority children and increased over time. This increase was confined to minority children, especially 1st generation immigrants.

4.1.2 Self-esteem

This was also high overall (M ≈ 3.0) and increased over time. Importantly, 1st generation immigrants showed lower self-esteem than either later generation or majority children, and this difference was particularly marked amongst older children. Amongst younger children there were no differences between the three groups. School diversity was also influential, with higher self-esteem being observed in more diverse schools, notably for younger children.

4.1.3 Cross-group friendships

Overall, the number of friends (from any group) reported increased over time; this was most evident amongst younger children. The number of friends from own versus other ethnic groups varied according to majority-minority status and school type: majority children reported a predominance of *ingroup* friends (3.7 vs. 1.0), whilst minority children had friends more evenly distributed. Later generation minority children showed the most balanced profile (2.3 vs. 2.5), while 1st generation minority children reported more friends from the outgroup (1.5 vs. 3.1). However, these differences were also affected by school diversity: majority children in low diversity schools revealed the largest intergroup difference (3.9 vs. .7); in high diversity schools they showed less marked ingroup bias (3.5 vs. 1.3). Minority children's friendships were similarly affected by diversity: outgroup preponderance in low diversity schools (1.8 vs. 2.8) and more balanced in high diversity ones (2.5 vs. 2.3). One child explained her cross-group friendships thus: *"Because when we sit with our friends, sometimes I've got these two friends in school dinners, Ellie and Tyler.....; and I've got this other friend Ramandeep and I sit with her as well. So, 'cos we're all friends and we are all mixed up so we sit like that with English and Indian"*.

4.1.4 Ingroup bias

Here there was a clear developmental effect - younger children showed more bias than older children, and an effect of majority-minority status – majority children were

more biased than minority children. There were also indications that the age effect was most pronounced amongst *majority* children in less diverse schools.

4.1.5 Teachers' ratings of children's socio-emotional behaviours

Teachers' ratings of behavioural problems revealed low incidences overall but there were some temporal variations which themselves depended on school diversity and majority-minority status: on 'emotional symptoms', all groups, with one exception, showed similar and stable (low) levels over time. The exception was majority children in less diverse schools who showed an *increase* in such symptoms over time. On 'peer problems' there were variations over time, group, school and age. First, there was a lower incidence of peer problems in more diverse schools, and among majority children (vs. minority) children, especially 1st generation immigrants. The incidence decreased over time but this temporal effect varied in a complex way. The largest temporal decreases were in minority children in low diversity schools, probably because they started from a rather high base-line. Finally, children's pro-sociality was higher in more diverse schools.

4.1.6 Ethnic discrimination

Children's reports of incidents of ethnic discrimination, either observed or directly experienced, showed relatively low overall levels (between 1.3 and 1.8 on our 0 – 4 scale), even though these levels still mean that most children had experienced at least one such social exclusion event. Such experiences were more likely at low diversity schools and among minority children. Here is one child's account: "*they might say I'm brainier than you or you're from a different country, you have weird food' and stuff...this boy has in the playground when I was small. He said, all to my friends, 'you've got different skin colour'".*

4.1.7 Ethnic identification

To the initial self-categorisation question, 67% of majority children identified themselves as English (47%) or British (18%). The next most popular category was Christian (18%). Most minority children chose an ethnic category: Indian (46%), Sikh (19%), Pakistani (6%), and few chose English (1%).

The strength of ethnic identification measure was only relevant to minority children. Overall, ethnic identification was moderately high and there were no temporal or developmental effects on this variable; just a tendency for identification to be higher in more diverse schools.

4.1.8 English identification

Levels of English identification were also moderately high overall and, unsurprisingly, were higher amongst majority than minority children, who themselves did not differ much as a function of immigrant status. This level remained unchanged over time for all groups except younger majority children who showed a clear increase over the 12 month period.

4.1.9 Acculturation preferences (minority children only)

Although acculturation orientations changed a little over time, the following patterns emerged: most preferred the ‘Integrationist’ option. This was not so pronounced at phase 1 but by phases 2 and 3, over 70% were classifiable as ‘integrationists’. The next preferred strategies were ‘Separation’ and ‘Assimilation’, approximately equal in popularity. ‘Marginalisation’ was only applicable to a small minority of children. There were age differences in these preferences however. Older children were more likely to be ‘integrationists’ than younger children, even though this was the modal strategy for both age groups. Younger children were over-represented in the ‘Separatist’ category. There were few age differences in the other two acculturation categories.

When we examined the discrepancy between own preference and what the outgroup was perceived as preferring (this time *both* majority and minority were included in the same analysis), there were three effects: The discrepancy declined over time, indicating a greater perceived intergroup consensus over acculturation preferences; minority children showed higher discrepancy scores than the majority; discrepancy scores were lower in more diverse schools.

4.1.10 Summary

In summary, greater school diversity was associated with *increases* in self esteem and pro-sociality, more balanced cross-group friendships, and *reductions* in emotional symptoms, peer problems, perceived acculturation discrepancies and experiences of discrimination. Minority children, especially 1st generation immigrants, reported *less* peer acceptance, self-esteem and ingroup bias, and *more* peer problems and discrimination experiences. There were relatively few age effects, the most notable being in ingroup bias (younger children showing more) and in acculturation orientations of minority children (older children being more ‘integrationist’).

4.2 Relationships among variables

In this section we are concerned with tracing the relationships between our predictor variables - acculturation, identification – and our outcome variables. Given the longitudinal design, our analytic strategy has been to control for the effects of the outcome variables at earlier time points (e.g., t_1 , t_2), and then use our predictor variables at those same time points to predict the outcomes at t_2 or t_3 . This permits some causal inference, especially since we can also check for ‘reverse’ relationships (i.e., ‘outcomes’ determining ‘predictors’). Such ‘reciprocal causality’ was sometimes observed. Two main analytic methods were employed: multiple regression and structural equation modelling. The latter was particularly useful since it permitted the inclusion of all three data collection points simultaneously.

We have concentrated in these analyses on minority group children because the theoretically more interesting issues pertain to them. Moreover, analyses of the majority children yielded fewer longitudinal effects.

4.2.1 Peer acceptance

Peer acceptance was predicted longitudinally by an ‘integration’ acculturation orientation. That is, for those children who scored relatively high on wanting contact with the majority group, there was a positive ‘causal’ relationship between desire for

culture maintenance and peer acceptance: the more they valued maintaining aspects of their heritage culture, the greater their sense of acceptance by their peers. For those scoring lower on wanting intergroup contact, the causal relationship seemed to run in the opposite direction: greater peer acceptance led to a greater desire to maintain their culture.

The relationship observed above was unidirectional, *from* acculturation orientation *to* peer acceptance. When we examined relationships between identification (both ethnic and national) and peer acceptance, the causal relationship was in the opposite direction. Here, greater peer acceptance *led to* heightened ethnic identification.

4.2.2 Self-esteem

Similar patterns were observed on this measure. Self-esteem was predicted longitudinally by an 'integration' orientation: for children scoring high on wanting outgroup contact, there was a positive 'causal' relationship between wanting to maintain one's culture and peer acceptance. This relationship was absent from those wishing less contact.

Ethnic identification also showed longitudinal associations with self-esteem, and these were bi-directional. Thus, ethnic identification 'causally' predicted later self-esteem (positively), and self-esteem also 'causally' predicted later ethnic identification (again positively).

4.2.3 Cross-group friendships

A high desire for cultural maintenance longitudinally predicted the number of *ingroup* friends. However, if the minority children *perceived* that the outgroup preferred an 'integrationist' orientation, then this facilitated the development of *outgroup* friendships.

Outgroup friendships also proved to be 'causally' related to ethnic identification in a negative direction: the more friends the children had with the majority group, the lower their later ethnic identification.

4.2.4 Ingroup bias

Overall, there were indications that strength of English identification was negatively and 'causally' related to ingroup bias, in a manner consistent with Gaertner and Dovidio (2000): The higher the English (superordinate) identification, the less ingroup bias among the subordinate categories. In contrast, ethnic identification was positively and longitudinally associated with ingroup bias, especially in low ethnic diverse schools. Thus, ethnic identification predicted ingroup bias in low diversity schools; whereas this relationship was non-significant in high diversity schools. In addition, a desire for cultural maintenance predicted longitudinally ingroup bias, but only in low diversity schools.

4.2.5 Teacher ratings of socio-emotional behaviour

An examination of the teachers' ratings of emotional symptoms in the minority children suggests that the positive outcomes above are not without some costs. Among those children who wanted high levels of outgroup contact, there was a

positive ‘causal’ relationship between desire for culture maintenance and emotional symptoms (as rated by their teachers). Recall that it was this same ‘integrationist’ group who also reported greater peer acceptance and self-esteem. For the children less interested in having outgroup contact, there was no relationship between cultural maintenance and later emotional symptoms.

4.2.6 Ethnic discrimination

A similar pattern was observed on the measure of perceived discrimination. Children who had a high desire for outgroup contact showed a positive ‘causal’ relationship between cultural maintenance and perceived discrimination; for the low contact children there was no such relationship.

4.2.7 Summary

The pattern of longitudinal relationships indicates a mixed story. On the one hand, minority children’s initial ‘integrationist’ orientations were predictive of higher social acceptance and self esteem later on. But, on the other hand, those same integrationist orientations were also longitudinally associated with more emotional symptoms and increased perceived ethnic discrimination. Perhaps their very desire to want to ‘join in’ with the majority children’s activities led to a higher chance of their occasional rejection and subsequent negative side effects. The effects of identification were more straightforward and went in both directions: greater peer acceptance increased both national and ethnic identification; ethnic identification predicted heightened self esteem and vice versa; friendships with majority children lowered ethnic identification; and English identification led to less ingroup bias. Finally, ethnic identification led to more ingroup bias, but *only* in low diversity schools.

4.3 Qualitative studies

These studies yielded several examples of the nuanced nature of children’s responses. For example, questions of racism were considered within the contexts of the ‘Big Brother’ race row and the ‘7/7’ bomb attacks on London. Some children held a belief that there was greater caring and understanding within their own ethnic group, while others gave illustrations of key trusting relationships from outside their ethnic group. Families were crucial in the development of ‘bonding’ capital but the concept of family often took on trans-national dimensions, encompassing relatives in countries abroad and in several British cities. Cultural traditions, such as visiting the Gudwara, were often framed in terms of their enjoyment in playing with friends and meeting relatives. Moreover, the examples given by the children indicated the important ways in which social capital was being maintained within contexts of social change. Issues of trans-national links were also present among the small sample of refugee children interviewed. Here they often tried to negotiate the frequently abrupt and painful transition from a cohesive and homogeneous home society to one in which they were the only child from their particular cultural background (see Annex 3 for some verbatim quotes). These preliminary data from the refugee sample already raise important issues regarding processes of acculturation in situations where children are not part of an established ethnic community.

5. Activities

During the project, we have communicated interim findings to the schools and teachers that assisted us. These activities involved joint school seminars held in 2006 and 2007, together with five informal briefings held in individual schools and six meetings with Minority Community Achievement and Equality and Diversity professionals in 2007. All participants in these events received a booklet summarising the main findings of the project (see Annex 4). We also prepared bookmarks as gifts to all the participating children.

We have also met periodically with the Steering Group that we set up at the outset of the project. This group consisted of 8 professionals from British and Dutch NGOs and Local Authorities with experience of working with ethnic minority and immigrant groups. This group advised us on research, policy and ethical issues as the project progressed. They also attended two of the school seminars.

The project team also participated in several activities of the Social Identities and Social Action Programme: inaugural meeting (2005), residential conference (Birmingham, 2006), Social Identity workshop (Cardiff, 2006), Researchers' meetings and SEU Roundtable.

6. Outputs

The work has been presented at: BPS, 2006 (Cardiff); Russell Sage Foundation, 2006 (NY); SPSSI, 2006 (Long Beach); International Association for the Study of Forced Migration, 2006 (Toronto); EAESP Small Group Meeting, 2006 (Kent); BPS Developmental, 2006 (Royal Holloway); Migration Research Unit, 2006 (Sussex); departmental colloquium, 2006 (Surrey); Ethnic Relations Departmental colloquium, 2007 (Utrecht); SRCD, 2007 (Boston); SPSSI immigration conference, 2007 (Toronto); CRONEM Conference, Nationalism and National Identities Today, 2007 (Surrey); European Developmental Psychology, 2007 (Jena); SSSI, 2007 (Southampton); ISTCE colloquium, 2007 (Lisbon); BPS Social, 2007 (Kent); EAESP General Meeting, 2008 (forthcoming).

Three papers have been submitted:

Nigbur, D. et al. (2007) Acculturation, well-being and classroom behaviour among British and British Asian primary-school children in the south-east of England: validating a child-friendly measure of acculturation attitudes. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*.

Cameron, L. et al. (2007) When 'groups' come into play: The importance of group membership for peer relations and ingroup bias amongst ethnic minority British children. *Developmental Psychology*.

Hossain, R. et al. (2007) Social capital, ethnicity and children's well-being: Aspects of social capital in the everyday lives of British Punjabi children. *International Journal of Migration Health and Social Care*.

We have also distributed a booklet to all schools participating in the project. This summarises the main findings in accessible language:

Brown, R. et al. (2007) *Primary-school children's cultural attitudes, identity and well-being in Sussex and Kent* (Annex 4).

7. Impacts

We made submissions to the Programme Director's briefing seminar for the Prime Minister (2006) and to the CIC (2007). We also contributed to seminars held by the Commission for Racial Equality and the Community Development Foundation (2007).

8. Theoretical and Policy implications

There are three main implications to be drawn from our findings. First, minority children as young as five years seem to have well developed ideas about their preferred acculturation orientation. Most opt for the 'integrationist' strategy, although this preference becomes even more marked as they get older. We believe that this is the first time that anyone has demonstrated acculturation attitudes in such young participants. Moreover, this acculturation orientation predicts subsequent outcomes such as self-esteem, peer acceptance and (negatively) emotional symptoms and perceived discrimination. Since these were longitudinal effects, unlike the cross-sectional associations that dominate the acculturation literature, we can have more confidence in their causal nature. Second, although the general picture of intergroup relationships in the schools we studied was a positive one, differences between majority and minority children were observed on several measures, with the latter usually showing some 'decrements' (e.g., self-esteem, peer acceptance and problems). These were especially noticeable in the 1st generation minority children. Taken together with the qualitative data, these remind us of the social psychological challenges faced by many new immigrants as they come to terms with life in a new culture. Third, the effects of school diversity were consistent and pervasive, most evidently on social relations: higher self-esteem, fewer peer problems and more cross-group friendships. Presumably some of these effects reflect opportunity differences, but they are nonetheless important since they show that school ethnic composition can significantly affect the chances of forming cross-group friendships, an important factor in promoting positive intergroup attitudes (Brown & Hewstone, 2005). These findings also speak against policies promoting single faith schools, since such policies are likely to have the effect of reducing ethnic diversity in schools.

9. Future research priorities

Our findings were obtained from a small number of mainly South Asian communities in SE England. It would be an obvious next step to extend the work to a wider range of socio-economic backgrounds and other geographical areas, especially those with larger proportions of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Somali children since these are groups that seem to be performing less well on standard school achievement indicators (IPPR, 2007). Indeed, it could be important to extend the longitudinal approach we have taken here to assess the implications of acculturation variables for school performance. Because immigration from Eastern Europe has increased in recent years, a focus on those immigrant groups would also be instructive. The qualitative interviews indicated that immigrant children become adept at identity 'switching' in different contexts. Quite how, when and why they do this would be fruitful topics for further research, especially to see how such behaviour was linked to our other outcome variables. Social capital issues also require further investigation specifically in relation to US research suggesting that increasing diversity results in people becoming more distrustful of each other with a diminution of both 'bonding'

and 'bridging' social capital (e.g., Bunting, 2007). The present research suggests that these conclusions may be difficult to sustain and that a more nuanced investigation of ethnicity and social capital among children would be timely.

10. Ethics

Standard ethical procedures were followed throughout. Children were asked for their consent and could withdraw at any time. Both parents and school teachers also were asked to consent to the children's participation, using specially designed leaflets. The work was cleared by Ethics Panels at Kent and Sussex universities.

Annex 1

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Annex 2

Samples of measures used

Self-esteem

Sample item:



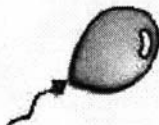
Here are some questions about what you are like:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids are not happy with the way they do a lot of things	BUT	Other kids think the way they do things is fine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Peer acceptance

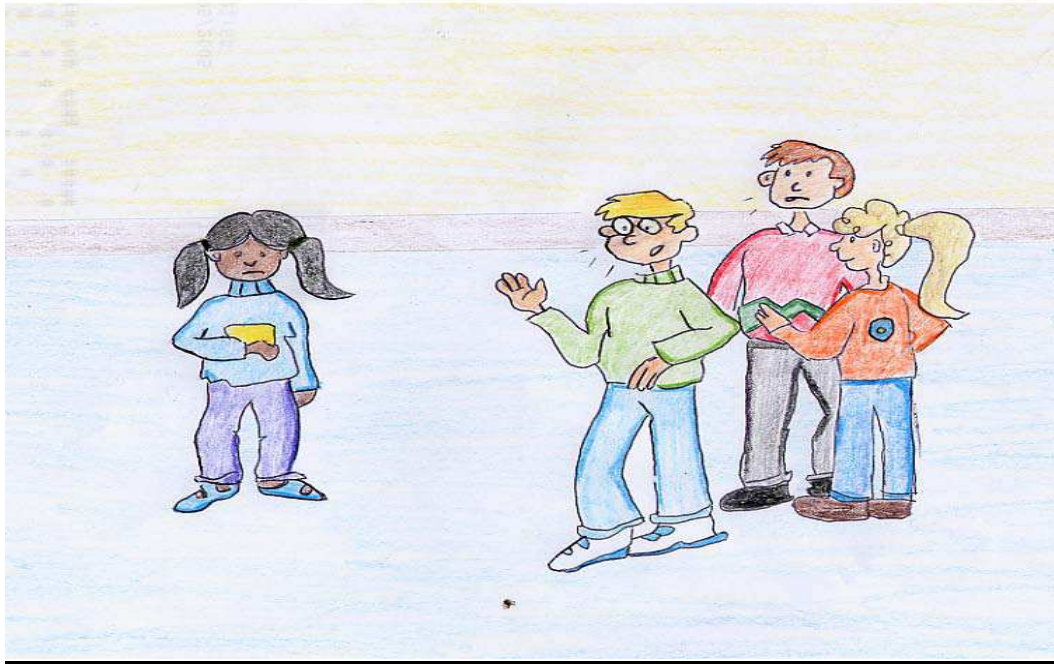
Sample items:

Do you have other kids to talk to at school? Do you have kids to play with at school? Do you feel left out of things at school? Do kids at school like you?

			
not at all <input type="checkbox"/>	a little bit <input type="checkbox"/>	quite <input type="checkbox"/>	very <input type="checkbox"/>

Perceived discrimination

A child is playing in the school playground. Another child would like to join in. The other children say that child can't play with them because their skin is a different colour.



Has this ever happened to you?

How often does this happen to you?






	●	● ●	● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●
<i>never</i>	<i>once</i>	<i>two or three times</i>	<i>quite often</i>	<i>very often</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ingroup Bias

Look at this group of people. What do you think about people like them? How do you feel about them?








Look at this group of people. What do you think about people like them? How do you feel about them?

				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

HAF_1

Look at this group of people. What do you think about people like them? How do you feel about them?





				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

IAF_1



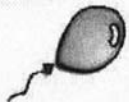
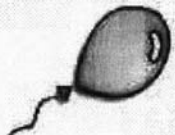
Acculturation orientations

Sample items

Do you think they should wear {traditional} clothes? How much do you think so?

			
not at all	a little bit	in the middle	quite a bit
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do they think these people should eat lunch together with white English people? How much do they think so?

			
not at all	a little bit	in the middle	quite a bit
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



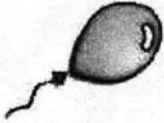
Ethnic and English identification

If you were writing a *true* story about yourself and wanted to tell people about what you're like, which words would you use? I'll show you some words, and you can choose as many as you like. Would you say you are ...

<input type="checkbox"/> Sri Lankan	<input type="checkbox"/> Bengali	<input type="checkbox"/> Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/> Nepalese
<input type="checkbox"/> Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/> White
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> British	<input type="checkbox"/> Boy	<input type="checkbox"/> Christian
<input type="checkbox"/> Girl	<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Sikh	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Sample item to measure strength of identification:

How important is it to you that you are Indian?

			
not at all	a little bit	quite	very
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (completed by teachers)

1. *Considerate of other people's feelings.*
2. *Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long.*
3. *Often complains of headaches, stomach aches or sickness.*
4. *Shares readily with other children (treats, toys, pencils etc.).*
5. *Often has temper tantrums or hot tempers.*
6. *Rather solitary, tends to play alone.*
7. *Generally obedient, usually does what adults request.*
8. *Many worries, often seems worried.*
9. *Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill.*
10. *Constantly fidgeting or squirming.*
11. *Has at least one good friend.*
12. *Often fights with other children or bullies them.*
13. *Often unhappy, downhearted or tearful.*
14. *Generally liked by other children.*
15. *Easily distracted, concentration wanders.*

16. *Nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence.*
17. *Kind to younger children.*
18. *Often lies or cheats.*
19. *Picked on or bullied by other children.*
20. *Often volunteers to help others, parents, teachers or other children.*
21. *Thinks things out before acting.*
22. *Steals from home, school or elsewhere.*
23. *Gets on better with adults than other children.*
24. *Many fears, easily scared.*
25. *Sees tasks through to the end, good attention span.*

Annex 3 Samples of verbatim quotes from qualitative interviews

Cultural maintenance and ethnic identity

1.1 Many children thought that it was important to maintain one's ethnic identity, and engaging in traditional customs, such as going to the Gudwara, visiting India and learning Punjabi.

"P: Some people they're Sikh and they haven't been to India. They don't even speak like Punjabi and sometimes they don't even go to Gudwara and people eat meat when they're not supposed to. Like when you're going to the Gudwara you're not allowed to eat meat or drink or anything you have to eat vegetarian for the whole day if you're going to the Gudwara and we go every Sundays but then people have like celebrations there so we can go as well. But when you go in the Gudwara you have to like over your head and stuff but when I go to India I feel more Indian because people don't go for...you can really experience that this is what India is like....make you more Indian"

"R: Why do you need to know how to speak Punjabi?"

P: Because it's your language

R: So how do you feel when you speak Punjabi? What do you feel like?"

P: I feel Indian."

"R: So do you think people, Sikh people, who live in England, should go to India?"

P: Yes

R: Why do you think that?"

P: Because it's most like their religion where they should live because that's their religion, Indian and India is the most place because there's loads of Indians there and most places where Indians can shop and everything."

"P: Like, we are like meat and vegetarian but when we go there sometimes we can eat meat and we have to like change our speaking rules like we have to speak Punjabi all the time and you have to say our first...like people in India they all say, people here they do as well like I do, they have to say their first...when they open the [X] they have to say these words when they go to sleep or when you wake up you wash your face and get all clean before you do it before you eat and then you can go to India and you can do that every day and then you have to like eat Punjabi food there because they don't have English food there. Like, we have our own religion food and we have to try and understand Punjabi if they say a lot because people over there they can speak English but they're not like used to it like we are. And then my cousins they're not that trained so we have to speak Punjabi there as well."

“R: Why [should Sikh Indian children go to the Gudwara]?”

P: Because all Sikhs should go to the Gudwara

R: Why?

P: Because all Sikhs are supposed to go to Gudwara.”

“R: So do you think it’s important to go to the Gudwara?”

P: Yeah

R: Why is that?

P: If you don’t go and you’re Sikh then that means you’re not Sikh then you’re English. Its part of the religion.

R: So what about Indian people who don’t go to the Gudwara then? Sikh people who don’t go, does that mean they’re English?

P: Yeah.

R: So what does that mean then?

P: If they don’t go to Gudwara and they go to church then they’ll be English.”

“P: He should go [go to Gudwara].

R: Why?

P: Because all Sikhs should go to the Gudwara

R: Why?

P: Because all Sikhs are supposed to go to Gudwara.”

“R: Why do you think he should do that?”

P: Because he’s Indian”

R: Why’s that?

P: Because all indians should learn it, like Indian”

1.2 Another theme that was extracted from the interviews was the idea was that engaging in cultural traditions, such as attending Gudwara, can increase knowledge of one’s ethnic group:

“R: Do you think its important to go [to the Gudwara]?”

P: Yeah

R: Why’s that?

P: Because you learn more about prayers and gurus and stuff.”

“P: Because when we go to the Gudwara there’s our guru. Our ten gurus they wrote this holy book and there’s loads of them yeah and they put them in there and they like read them and they play some music and in those songs they tell us all about the gurus. If we can listen to them we can learn more.”

“R: Because the Gudwara is most places where Indians go to pray and she should go and pray there for sometimes.”

“R: you’ll learn all the stories about gurus and learn gurus words and then normally you learn...silent e...there’s about ten of our signs that makes the

words idfferent and if you don't put any of the signs in they still make a word"

"R: Is it important to learn Punjabi?

P: Yes 'cause my grandma doesn't speak English so I'd really like to, like, understand what she says so... yeah, I like it"

"R: *Why's that [learning Punjabi] important?*

P: So when people ask you a question you won't understand what they're saying if they're a different language."

2 Partaking in traditions such as going to the Gudwara, visiting India and speaking Punjabi appear to be very important for maintaining familial relations also.

"R: *So do you think it's important for you to go on holiday to India?*

P: Yeah

R: *Why's that?*

P: Because my family lives there"

"R: *Why do you think it would be good to go there [to the Gudwara]?*

P: Because I can see some of my family"

"P: If she goes [to the Gudwara] with them she'll be worshipping to our gods and then our god will look after her and she'd just feel proud that she went.

"P: He will go to India then he can see his cousins there because if he don't know his cousins then he should go then he'll know his cousins."

"P: Because you know when you go to India you might have your mum and dad's brothers and sisters out there and you can go and meet them and you have some...in the summer holidays you can have some fun over there"

"P: he should go because then like he'll see hisGrandma and his Grandfather there and like he'll get some new stuff"

"R: *And who do you usually go [to Gudwara] with?*

P: My mum and dad and sisters and if we go and some other people are invited my cousins might be invited, Tamveer and Diljit"

"R: *So who do you see there [at Gudwara] then? Do you go with your family? Do you see your friends there?*

P: I go with my family. Sometimes I see my friends but not all the time.

R: *Friends from school?*

P: Yeah

R: *And cousins and things? Do you have any cousins that go?*

P: Yeah"

3 Many children also argued some cultural practices, such as learning to speak Punjabi, were important to learn for communication reasons. This helped them maintain relationships with members of their family.

“P: she should learn more about her religion so she can write her religion and write her language and she can learn about her religion and then when she grows up and goes out to India or something she can like talk Punjabi and write Punjabi and she can teach other people as well.”

“R: *Why do you think it's important [to learn Punjabi]?*

P: Like if you want to write a message in Indian and then like you write in English and someone doesn't, another Indian person doesn't know what it says then they won't know”

“P: Because when you grow up and when you're talking to somebody who doesn't understand English you can speak to them in Punjabi instead and then they'll understand it and then you'll just feel prouder because you spoke it and then this other person will understand you.”

4. Other children did not feel strongly either way about engaging in cultural traditions.

4.1 Some children clearly took part in cultural practices because they felt an obligation to their family to participate in them.

“P: I have to go [to Punjabi school] so....”

“R: *What about if he decided not to go [to Gurdwara]?*

P: Then the parents might feel sad.”

“[I go to Punjabi school because] my parents said so”

“P: Because my dad says I should speak in Punjabi at home and English is...my dad says when you go out you can speak whatever language you want”

4.2 Other children were generally ambivalent about whether Sikh Indians should engage in traditional behaviours or not.

“P: If they want to....some people don't believe like in any religion and some people do believe in different religions and that why it's up to them if they want to go but if you're a Sikh you might want to go and sometimes these Sikh people...they have that turban around their head they are like real Sikhs and they don't eat any meat and they don't ever eat meat, they've got this special thing around them it's like a knife, a big one, and they wear all the Sikh stuff, the g***, the turban, all sorts of stuff. They wear the five k's.”

“P: If she wants to go she can go to India to spend her summer and have fun there but if she doesn't want to she can stay home and spend time with her mum”

“P: If he wants to go [to Punjabi school].....if he don’t want to go then he doesn’t have to go but if he wants to go then he can go”

5 Another theme that became apparent is the idea that you can be ‘more’ or ‘less’ Sikh or Indian. That is, children were aware that you can be more Sikh or less Sikh if you engage in different cultural practices:

“P: Some people they’re Sikh and they haven’t been to india. They don’t even speak like Punjabi and sometimes the don’t even go to Gudwara and people eat meat when they’re not supposed to. Like when you’re going to the Gudwara you’re not allowed to eat meat or drink or anything you have to eat vegetarian for the whole day if you’re going to the Gudwara and we go every Sundays but then people have like celebrations there so we can go as well. But when you go in the Gudwara you have to like over your head and stuff but when I go to India I feel more indian because people don’t go for...you can really experinece that this is what India is like.....make you more Indian”

6 There was also some evidence of identity switching, where children felt more Indian in some contexts, and more English in others. This has been found in adolescents before, but has not previously been found in younger children.

“P: I feel both [English and Pakistani]... Because sometimes I don’t really act like I’m a Pakistani. Sometimes I act English, but sometimes I don’t act like I’m English, I’m a Pakistani so both”

6.1 Switching between speaking Punjabi at home and English at school seemed to be an important part of switching identities.

R: So what do you prefer to speak, do you like speaking English or Punjabi?

P: Both

R: Yeah? So how do you feel when you speak Punjabi? Do you feel different or do you just feel the same?

P: I feel different.

R: Why? In what way do you feel different?

P: It’s just that first I’m speaking English and my whole mind changes then I....

R: What changes, sorry?

P: My mind.

R: Mmmm

P: My mind changes to Punjabi so I can talk Punjabi as well.

R: OK so what do you mean your mind changes?

P: Like, I’m speaking English at school and with my friends and when I go home and then I say I have to change my mind instead of English I’ll speak Punjabi but I have to speak English with my brother because he doesn’t know he’s only about 6 or so.

R: So do you feel more Indian when you speak Punjabi?

P: Yeah

R: Do you? What’s that like then?

P: It's like more I can't explain"

6.2 Other children felt both English and Indian, mainly because they were knowledgeable of both cultures, for instance knowing English and Punjabi.

"R: What would you say, do you think you're more Indian or Sikh than English or are you both?"

P: I'm both really.

R: And what do you think makes you both?"

P: Um well because my religion is Indian and I believe in all Indian stuff but then I'm English as well because I speak a lot of English and I live in England and I know a lot of English stuff so I'm really part of both."

7 Another theme that emerged was that children sometimes felt like they stood out because of their traditions, particularly when they were not in a context where there were only Indian Sikh people. For instance, some children said they felt self-conscious wearing Indian clothes when they are in the town centre shopping.

"R: What about if you go down the shops with your mum? What do you wear then?"

P: Mostly I wear English clothes, sometimes I've just been out at somebody's birthday party or to the gurdwara or just like wearing Indian suits at home, I sometimes go to shops like that.

R: Do you like doing that?"

P: It's ok

R: Why, what's wrong with it?"

P: Sometimes I think that, I feel like all different because nearly everybody else is wearing English clothes and I'm the only person who is wearing Indian clothes.

R: So do you think you feel more Indian when you wear your Indian clothes, or not really?"

P: I feel Indian more because it's like my own religion, how we get dressed and everything like that."

Inter-ethnic contact

Children were overwhelmingly positive about inter-ethnic contact, being friends with or interacting with children from the white English ethnic majority. The interviews revealed that, despite being very positive about inter-ethnic contact, children did have some concerns about it.

1 Many children held cross-group friendships and were happy about this and would not like to play in settings with one ethnic group only, since this would prevent them from playing with all their friends.

1.1 Some children clearly played in ethnically mixed friendship groups, and preferred it that way:

“P: Because when we play, today we were playing with one English person, Connor, and then this other boy who’s English and Indian and then there was these other two girls who wanted to play and then there were these other two girls who wanted to play and there were two English girls so we were mixed up and playing”

“P: Because we have...we can talk to each other...and we can have some English people to talk to and some Indian people and in [setting with just Indian children] we can only have like Indian people to talk to and in [setting with just White English children] I’ve got only English and not that many Indians and in [a mixed setting] got Indians and English together.”

1.2 Many children also would not like to play in settings with only Indian children, because this would mean they would not get to play with their English friends. Playing in mixed ethnic groups is clearly important for maintaining cross-ethnic friendships:

“P: Because when we sit with our friends sometimes I’ve got these two friends in school dinners, Ellie and Tyler, I sit with them sometimes and I’ve got this other friend Ramandeep and I sit with her as well, so because we’re all friends and we are all mixed up so we sit like that with English and Indian”

“P: [not like Indian only setting because] Ellie and Tyler won’t be there...they are really funny and we enjoy at school dinners that why I would like to sit [in mixed ethnic setting].

“P: [in Indian only setting] I would feel lonely there because I haven’t got no English people either”

2. Benefits or positive consequences of inter-ethnic contact: Children thought there were a number of positive outcomes of inter-ethnic contact, including exchange of knowledge and information across the cultural divide. Children

thought the information they could gain from English children would be useful and interesting, and vice versa. They also thought being in an inter-ethnic setting gave them an opportunity to make new friends and have a wider variety of friends with different backgrounds.

2.1 Exchange of information/ knowledge

“P: Beause I’d like to see different kinds of food they have and you get to know more people again and it would be really fun ‘cause except from just knowing everyone’s story again and again and again you can listen to other people’s stories as well, so it’ll be fun”

“P: Because its like English people will like learning to cook new stuff and Indian people will learn how to cook English stuff and then you can cook some stuff and then have a taste and if you like it you know how to make it again”

“P: It’s mixed with the English and the Sikhs and they share their food together and children would talk with each other and parents would talk with their parents so it would be nice to have dinner with the two families together so then they can have a chance to know each other.

“P: If they talked about their stuff and English stuff then they’d know a little bit about India and they’d know a little bit about England so if the Christian family went to India they’d know what to do because the Sikh family have told them what to do.”

“P: If they talked about their stuff and English stuff then they’d know a little bit about India and they’d know a little bit about England so if the Christian family went to India they’d know what to do because the Sikh family have told them what to do.”

“P: They might learn what the Sikhs do which they never used to do like go to the Gudwara and go to Punjabi school to learn more and maybe they might get their children to go to Punjabi school if they found out about it and they might go to India and go to a Gudwara and see what its like.”

“P: find out more and they’d be able to play together and see what its like to play with English people and Indian people and they’d be having lots of fun and they won’t notice it.”

2.2 Some children had clearly already experienced this type of exchange of cultural knowledge:

“P: English are really good at learning Indian dances, so... I think they’re good... they find it fun”

“P: they said, oh why don’t you try some chicken nuggets”

2.3 Many children said that being in a mixed ethnic setting gave them an opportunity to form new friendships

“P: [I prefer a mixed ethnic setting because] it’s spread out and you can meet new people.”

2.4 Children also thought that mixed ethnic groups would be more succesful in reaching their goals, because children from different ethnic groups might have different strengths and weaknesses:

“P: Indians are not always good at everything and Englishes are not always good at everything”

3 Some children argued that it was not fair to play in settings with only Indian or White children, since this would require them to exclude other children:

“P: I’d join [a mixed ethnic setting]. I’d just get all of them mixed up like that. Because it’s not fair for all the other kids that wanna play with you, and they probably want to play, and they... the other kids they prob... and the Indian people and English people they might wanna play”

4 Some children showed a desire to play with English children because they wanted to partake in that culture too:

“P: Sometimes I want to play English games too”

5 Negative aspects of inter-ethnic contact: Despite being generally positive about cross-ethnic contact, some children had concerns about it, particularly in contexts in which there might be few Indian children, and more white English children. The potential for racism played on children’s minds, and they worried about not being able to communicate with the other ethnic group.

5.1 Awareness of potential racism when in contact with ethnic outgroup: Children seemed to be a little wary of cross-ethnic situations and were certainly aware of the possibilty of racism.

“P: If people were there and I was sitting there, some Sikhs like me and other religions like Hindu and Pakistani, some people like this would be a bit rude like ‘you’ve got different skin’ and ‘you’re like that and this’”

“P: Because they got a mixture of Indians and Englishes and like well, if... em, actually I’ll pick that group, ‘cause erm, if there was mixture, mixture is good as well, if they were all sitting at a table, and English people didn’t like Indian people, erm the English people, if they sat in a mixture with the Indian people, they might say that, like you’re, ‘I don’t like’, ew your food’s ugly, and they might put the Indian people down.”

“P: This boy has in the playground when I was small. He said, all to my friends, you’ve got different skin colour and you’re still in year two and you need your mum to hold your hand to cross the road and stuff.”

“P: People just come up and go ‘why are you playing?’ and sometimes I don’t like it when people say that to me.”

“R: Have you ever been called names because of the colour of your skin?

P: Yeah

R: What at school?

P: Not at school but outside school sometimes.”

“P: [prefer mixed ethnic setting] because its all different people and they won’t pick on me and stuff”

2.2 Anxieties about communication:

“P: Well I’m Indian and everyone else is English and they might only talk English and I might not know that much English and might give the wrong answer or something like that”

“R: Would that be hard or would it be just the same as if you had a Sikh kid over to your house?”

P: It would be quite hard.

R: Why’s that?

P: Because I’m Indian and they’re...they (White children) are hard to control.

R: Hard to what, sorry?

P: Hard to control.

R: Why would you want to control them? You mean they wouldn’t do what you told them to do?

P: Yeah.”

“P: If I sit next to that one (White child) then they’ll keep talking to each other and they ask me questions like ‘what’s your name’ and then I’ll be confused.”

“P: I’m confused and like I said with the school dinners one and the asking questions one at a time.”

2.3 Awareness of cultural differences: Children appeared to be aware that there were some cultural references that White English children would not understand. This would mean they would not be able to talk about these things with White English children. This seemed to be an issue with some children who did not want to be restricted in what they talked in this way.

“P: In [a mixed ethnic group] it would be OK but you wouldn’t be able to talk about your family things”

“P: Because sometimes english people don’t know things that maybe I want to talk about”

Some children preferred playing in groups with other Indian children because then:

“R: I don’t have to feel... different”

2.4 Feeling lonely and sad: Many children said they would feel lonely and sad if they were playing in settings with only White English children, or only Indian children since they would not be able to play with all their friends. They also would be more self-conscious in settings in which there were only white English children since they would stand out more:

“P: I’d feel left out because I would be the only one Indian and I wouldn’t really like that, I hate being the only one”

“P: I would be lonely.”

“P: upset.”

“P: sad.”

“R: [Prefer playing in groups with other Indian children because then] I don’t have to feel... different”

3 Quality of cross-ethnic friends: Some children appeared to believe friendships formed with White English children would be of a lower quality than those friendships they form with other Indian children. They appeared to be a little wary of them:

‘P: with Indian children, they’ll care about you more, maybe...you might see it in their face, all their feelings’

4 Some children also expressed negative views of White English children:

“P: they’ve got freckles and I don’t like freckles.”

“P: some [white children] I don’t like”